

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

~~Please cancel claims 6, 16-17, 22, 71, 81 and 86 without prejudice or disclaimer.~~

1. (Twice amended) An isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of ~~5-30 amino acids~~ which ~~peptide exhibits antagonistic activity directed against IL-6, having comprising~~ at least one string of ~~5~~ 12 consecutive amino acids ~~long in common with the following amino acid sequence: EWGPRSTPSLTTKAVLLLVRKFQNSPAED from (SEQ ID NO:~~ 11), wherein said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide has IL-6 antagonistic activity as determined by a bioassay for determining IL-6 antagonistic activity.

2-3. Canceled.

4. (Amended) A The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide according to of claim 1 of ~~5~~ 12-20 amino acids.

5. (Previously amended) The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 of ~~5-12~~ amino acids.

6. (To be canceled)

7. Canceled.

8. (Twice amended) A peptide composition, wherein at least two isolated, recombinant or purified peptides of claim 1 are chemically linked directly or via spacer molecules.

9. (Amended) A The peptide composition according to of claim 8, wherein the at least two chemically linked peptides are linked with lysine.

10. Withdrawn.

11. (Amended) A ~~The~~ peptide composition ~~according to~~ of claim 8, wherein at least four isolated, recombinant or purified peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

12. (Twice amended) A mixture comprising the isolated, recombinant or purified ~~peptides~~ peptide of claim 1.

13-14. Canceled.

15. (Twice amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ preparation comprising:  
the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1, together with ~~at least one suitable~~  
~~excipient for administration~~  
an inert carrier.

16. (To be canceled).

17. (To be canceled).

18. Canceled.

19. Withdrawn.

20. Canceled.

21. (Twice amended) A method for culturing cells comprising:  
incubating or culturing said cells in a medium; and  
contacting said cells, or the medium wherein said cells are incubated or cultured, with the  
isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1.

22. (To be canceled).

23. (Previously twice amended) A method for manufacturing a medicament for topical or intra-mammary application, characterized in that the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 is used.

24-46. Canceled.

47. Withdrawn.

48-70. Canceled.

71. (To be canceled).

72. (Amended) The peptide composition of claim 9, wherein ~~the~~ at least ~~four~~ two linked peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

73. Withdrawn.

74. (Amended) A method for exerting agonistic IL-6 activity at concentrations ~~that are~~ relatively equivalent to of 7.5 to 120 µg/ml comprising:  
~~characterized in that~~ contacting a cell with the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1;  
wherein the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide is provided at a concentration of about 7.5 to 120 µg/ml; and  
wherein contacting the cell is performed in the presence of IL-6 thus exerting agonistic IL-6 activity is used.

75. (Previously added) A mixture comprising the peptide composition of claim 8.

76-77. Withdrawn.

78. (Twice amended) A ~~pharmaceutical preparation~~ composition comprising:  
the peptide composition of claim 8; and ~~; together with at least one suitable excipient for~~  
~~administration~~  
an inert carrier.

79-80. Withdrawn.

81. (Canceled).

82-85. Withdrawn.

86. (Canceled)

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